JULY 1975

Founded 1921 by R. Palme Dutt

LABOUR MONTHLY

A MAGAZINE OF LEFT UNITY · 30p

Andrew Rothstein
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Dick Seabrook
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LABOUR MONTHLY

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VOL 57 No 7 JULY 1975

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BIGGER BATTLES AHEAD

'People always have been the foolish victims of deception and self-deception in politics, and they always will be, until they have learnt to seek out the *interests* of some class or other behind all the moral, religious, political and social phrases, declarations and promises.'

LENIN, *The Three Sources and Three Component Parts of Marxism*, 1913.

'They are ringing their bells now; soon they will be wringing their hands.'

ROBERT WALPOLE, 1739.

June 14, 1975

By the time these lines appear in print, the tumult around the referendum of June 5 and the shouting over the votes cast will have died away. Yet still the echoes of triumph in the millionaire press—now almost wholly Tory, whatever its past labels—deserve to be examined. 'A great majority for Europe' (*Times*); 'Landslide "Yes" to Europe' (*Telegraph*); 'A thundering Yes to the Common Market' (*Mail*); ' "Yes" Britain decides' (*Express*); 'By a clear majority . . . the British people have declared themselves to be Europeans' (*Sunday Times*); and so on. With these went a torrent of compliments to Harold Wilson as the architect of that triumph—particularly for having 'secured the backing of the country over the heads of a majority in his own party' (*Guardian*), because the 'trade union block vote has proved quite unrepresentative of the millions whose views they pretended to convey' (*Times*), while 'the Right speaks not merely for itself . . . but for a majority of the Labour Party' (*Sunday Times*). More than that, said the Liberal leader Thorpe, it 'was a decisive No to the Parliamentary Labour Party, the Labour Party Executive and the Party's special conference': while Tory leader Mrs Thatcher underlined that this 'massive Yes could not have come about without a massive Conservative Yes'—and the *Telegraph* was not alone in drawing the conclusion that what had been established in the referendum was a 'working coalition'.

Class Interests—On Which Side?

Leave aside for this occasion the question of exactly what 'Europe' the referendum was about—except to note that, running through the comments and especially those of leading Tories, was the loudly expressed hope that now more attention would be paid to the unification of 'Europe' and to its 'defence', in other words, to the

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formation of a West European political and military bloc combining Nato and the EEC in a way they kept quiet about until now. But on which side were the 'interests of some class or other' emphasised—more or less clearly according to the political views of the campaigners? Beyond question the working class organisations were the core of opposition to the Common Market. That was obvious, since the distinct majority of Labour MPs, the substantial majority of the Labour Party's National Executive Committee and of its special conference on April 26, and the overwhelming majority of the TUC—covering a very wide range of opinions—all took that stand. On which side were 'moral, religious, political and social phrases' bandied about as though classes did not exist? It was the side of the pro-Market faction—and that was only natural, since a vast array of the biggest manufacturing, trading and financial firms (most of them already linked in one way or another with foreign trusts) took nearly a page of advertising space in the *Times* to proclaim their allegiance to the EEC, supporting the united campaigning machines of the Tory and Liberal Parties. Compared with these, the cabinet majority were little more than the Charlie McCarthy puppets of the real pro-Market forces. And it was this side which won the 17.4 million votes in the referendum.

The Real Swing of Votes

Decisive? Wait a bit. Look at the results of last year's general elections in which the Tories, then as now backed by the big trusts, and the Liberals fought separately. In October 1974, their total vote was 15.8 millions—less, but not much less, than their *combined* vote in June 1975 (especially when you remember that there were Tory and pro-capitalist votes 'concealed' among the votes of the Scottish and Welsh Nationalists). But in February 1974, their combined vote was just 18 millions, even more than in June 1975! So it was not a swing of the British electorate to the Tory/Liberal/right-wing Labour side that really took place in the referendum, not a revolt by the long-suffering rank and file against 'left-wing domination', as the hacks of the capitalist press made out. It was a coming together and consolidation of the strictly *anti-labour* vote (just as on one other famous occasion, of which more in a moment). In fact, all talk of the trade union block vote being 'unrepresentative' and of right-wing spokesmen like Wilson and Callaghan, Jenkins and Prentice speaking not merely for themselves but for 'a majority of the Labour Party' is just so much rubbish. They were but the 'Labour' signboard for the Tory-Liberal alliance (as on that previous occasion mentioned

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earlier). Now look still more closely at the following table giving another side of the figures:

	February 1974 millions	October 1974 millions	June 1975 millions
Electorate	39.8	40.1	40.1
Voted	31.3	29.2	25.1
Abstained	8.5	10.9	15.0
Voted Labour	11.7	11.5	—
Voted 'No' (i.e. mainly Labour)	—	—	8.5

Thus, if the *mainly* labour and trade union camp lost three million votes compared with last October, and still more compared with February last year, it was not because those votes had swung over to Messrs Wilson, Callaghan, Jenkins and Prentice (the latter distinguished himself on June 8 by telling the Oh-so-socialist BBC that the referendum had 'debunked' the claims of his own Party conference and of most of the trade union delegates there). It was because the trend to *abstention* under the Labour government has accelerated to a sinister degree. Observe, too, that this has happened before. Under the previous Labour government, while the electorate went up from 36 millions in 1966 to 39.3 millions in 1970, abstentions *increased* from 8.7 millions to 11 millions, while Labour votes *decreased* and Tory votes *increased.* In plain language what happened in the referendum was that millions of actual Labour voters—and millions more *potential* Labour voters—fell victims to what Lenin called 'deception and self-deception in politics', and stayed at home instead of going to the polling stations.

Why Did Labour Voters Abstain?

Why did this happen in 1974-75 as it had happened in 1966-70? That is the real question which the labour movement faces today, three months before the Annual Conference of the Labour Party, at which the 'debunked' trade union delegations will once more be casting their votes. Can any socialist, or indeed any objective student of political trends in Britain, be in any doubt about the answer? Fundamentally, it was because more and more clearly workers who are not yet socialists but who are impelled from time to time by their *interests as workers* to vote Labour, when Labour gives them a lead—an essential step towards becoming socialists themselves—have not only failed to get that lead, but have on this occasion been thrown back by the spectacle of Labour leadership divided between pro-Tory and anti-Tory wings, to fall victims of the deceptive phrases, declarations and promises coming from Tory, Liberal and right-wing

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Labour politicians alike. In 1970, the Labour government went into the general election with a record of the anti-trade union scheme, *In Place of Strife*, Wilson's Prices and Incomes Board (i.e. of wage restraint), of support for the United States' bloody adventures in Indo-China and of constant obstruction of the socialist countries' proposal of a European Security Conference—'top-level capitulation to Tory policies' which produced 'disruption of the labour movement's ranks in the electoral field', as R. Palme Dutt wrote in this journal (August 1970). Result? Mass abstention and defeat for Labour. In 1975, the majority of the Labour cabinet, headed by the Prime Minister, Chancellor of the Exchequer, Foreign Secretary and Home Secretary, went into the referendum with a programme which had nothing in common with the class interests of the workers but everything in common with those of the great capitalist firms, British and multinational. It was therefore willingly supported by Heath, Thatcher, Thorpe and all other spokesmen and spokeswomen for capitalist policies. Result? Still bigger mass abstention and a success for the camp of big business.

Labour Systematically Disorganised

And this *political* capitulation had its expression as always in *organisation* too. When, in the history of the Labour Party, have its parliamentary and government leaders openly attacked in a national poll the considered policy of the ten million-strong trade union movement? When have they ever before, after being defeated by a large majority in the National Executive Committee of their own party, secured by sheer threats the renunciation by that NEC of its obvious right to *organise* a campaign for what it believes in, up and down the country? When, in over half a century since the Labour Party introduced individual membership, and since the consequent large-scale formation of constituency parties began, have the latter been left to themselves to decide—at a moment when the economic and political future of Britain was at stake—whether or not they should organise the campaign against the capitalist Common Market themselves, whether or not they should come to a tacit or public agreement with the Tory and Liberal organisations, as such, to 'hold the ring'? Such a situation meant negating all elementary principles of organisation. It could not come as a complete surprise to anyone that, while thousands of the active rank and file—trade unionist, Labour, Communist—battled on; while the *Morning Star* conducted an outstanding fight, alone against the multi-millioned hostile press; while individual ministers and MPs fought on too; and

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while a number of trade unions, big and small, themselves descended into the battlefield in an effort to mobilise their members, unprecedented in any election contest since 1918: nevertheless several million workers normally voting Labour stayed at home on June 5, in bewilderment and even disgust. 'A free, democratic campaign,' Harold Wilson called it that evening—free, that is, for the millionaire press, the BBC and TV, the Common Market propaganda emanating from the government, the huge sums spent direct by capitalist brainwashing organisations or coming from abroad.

Heralds of Capitalist Offensive

It was only to be expected that hints during the campaign that the working coalition ought to be succeeded by similar political co-operation afterwards between 'moderate-minded people of all parties' should make their appearance. Equally predictable was the demand from all these 'moderates' that those members of the government, such as Benn and Hart who stuck by Labour Party policy—'extreme socialists', Mr Prentice called them and their like in his memorable BBC interview of June 8—should be thrown out or at least demoted. This demand the Prime Minister has loyally fulfilled. But of more direct consequence was the immediate demand from the newspapers and politicians speaking the minds of the millionaires—and subsequently backed by the bankers of the Western capitalist world—that the Labour government should now feel itself free to launch an economic offensive. What must be reversed, wrote the *Times* (June 6) is 'the decline in the competitive efficiency of industry' and the position of 'trade unions which are at once extremely powerful and in terms of the search for higher productivity very backward'—which, as any shop steward understands, means imposing further cuts in real wages and weakening the unions. What is needed, the *Times* went on, is 'a tough, determined programme for ending inflation' and 'a complete, if necessary ruthless programme of national reform'—words which require no deep political analysis, especially in the local councils, to be understood as meaning heavy cuts in the social services of all kinds. In one and the same tone, the other mouthpieces of capitalist opinion made the same demand—adding, in the case of the *Daily Express* and the *Guardian*, the demand to increase exports, which the *Express* spelled out as requiring that the government should 'allow the pound to float slowly downward' (whereby, it might have added but did not, the standard of living might be still further reduced). The Trades Union Congress in September, the Labour Party Conference in October, wideawake

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workers in the factories and the labour movement generally, will undoubtedly see the necessity and have the opportunity to cope with these threats.

New Ways of Deserting

In this connection, some historical perspective will not be amiss. In 1931, after two years of gradual capitulation (its keynote was the late Herbert Morrison's assurance to the assembled British industrialists that Labour looked on the employer 'as a man and a brother') the second Labour government was broken up in the midst of an artificially created financial crisis by the then Prime Minister, Chancellor of the Exchequer and Colonial Secretary, who deserted the Labour Party and formed with the Tories and most Liberals a 'National Government'. While the Labour vote fell, largely through abstentions, in the ensuing general election, the 'National' vote was almost exactly the same as the previous Tory and Liberal votes, taken together. Thereupon, however, if Macdonald and Snowden as Labour ministers had chastised the people with whips, they did so as 'National' government ministers with scorpions. Forty years later, on October 28, 1971, a new step along the Macdonald road was taken—but from inside the Labour Party, not outside. Sixty-nine Labour MPs, headed by Mr Jenkins, voted with the Tories on Heath's decision to take Britain into the Common Market, thereby giving him a majority of 112 instead of putting him in a minority of probably 46. This saved the Tory government, enabling it in the following years to turn the scorpions once more against the people—by heavy cuts in social services expenditure, by the anti-union Industrial Relations Act, by the planned raising of food prices, by the three-day week used in the fight against the miners. The 69 did not however leave the Labour Party, nor were they required to do so by Mr Wilson. Now a third step has been taken. Not eighteen months have passed since the labour movement succeeded at last in defeating Heath once again (February 1974), not nine months since it brought about the return of a slender Labour majority (October 1974)—and once again the heroes of 1971, this time headed by the Prime Minister himself, reinforced by several leading colleagues in the cabinet, have made common cause with the Tories in procuring a 'Yes' majority of the kind analysed earlier, and in circumstances not unfairly characterised by Clive Jenkins as those of the Eatanswill election immortalised by Charles Dickens. Moreover, while defying the wishes of the trade union movement on which the Labour Party relies for its finances, and the decision of a Labour Party Conference

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held in strict conformity with their own constitution, they have done in effect what Macdonald did in 1931 while remaining members of the Labour Party as the 69 did in 1971. It is an unmistakable trend which can go further still if unchecked.

The September and October Assemblies

Of course, what the coming TUC and Labour Party Conference will have to contend with is not merely the formal side of this grotesque sequence of challenges, but the more threatening and practical consequences. That the working class movement has more than enough potential strength to cope with such a situation is not open to doubt. But equally it cannot be doubted that to ignore the bitter lessons of these last weeks, or even to try and find some formula of Munich-like appeasement of the pro-Tory and pro-capitalist trend, must bring in its train still bigger disasters for British labour. Nothing in working class history gives ground for believing that the movement will tamely accept the prospect of such disasters, particularly if those who are most influential point it out. A very great responsibility now falls, not only on the September and October assemblies of British labour, but on all those, rank and file as well as leaders, who see the issues clearly and can make their voices heard in the weeks ahead. The referendum was a battle—but it was the harbinger of bigger battles still.

Andrew Rothstein

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UNION DEMOCRACY AND POSTAL BALLOTS

Dick Seabrook*

A STRANGER to the British industrial and political scene, reading through press comment on the decision of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers to finish with the postal ballot system of electing national officials, might be forgiven for assuming that most of the well-known national newspapers and such journals as the *Economist* had been powerful allies of the trade unions in the hard and persistent struggles that have gone on over the years to create what are still the most effective organisations for defending and advancing the conditions of life and work of Britain's workers. Those of us who have been in the battle to build the unions for any length of time, know differently. A campaign is being run for 'democracy in the unions'. I doubt very much whether the press and such self-effacing, frugal-living, modest persons as Bernard Levin can teach us anything about 'democracy in the unions'. Hypocrisy, yes! Democracy, never!

In nearly fifty years of fighting to recruit members in all kinds of trades and conditions, create effective organisation, establish good pay and conditions and efficient negotiating machinery, I cannot recall a single instance in which I had the press, other than the labour press, on my side. Occasionally perhaps a single journalist, with some greater knowledge and understanding and sympathy than others, but their employers and the newspaper owners, never! The spectacle, therefore, of the *Times* and the *Mail* and the others beating their breasts and demanding greater democracy in the unions makes me want to vomit!

What is it all about? Five years ago the AUEW decided to introduce postal balloting in the election of its national officials. Most other people in the trade union movement thought they had 'gone off their rocker.' The cost is enormous; the 'democracy' of the process is suspect, a substantial number of members are automatically disqualified because of address changes or for other administrative reasons; the result is no more likely to give the members the leader-

* Dick Seabrook was National President of the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers from 1967 to 1973. Though not a member of the Council at the time, he was invited by Norwich City Council to be Lord Mayor of Norwich for 1972-73, in recognition of the role of the trade union movement in the life of the local community, and his contribution to it. He is now a city councillor, having been subsequently elected to the new City of Norwich District Council.

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ship they want than the system in operation before, or the many other different systems in operation in unions which have evolved them to suit their own circumstances and arising from their own history and process of growth and development.

In May the AUEW National Committee, meeting as it does every five years as the Union's Rules Revision Committee, was evenly divided on the question of continuing with postal balloting or returning to the previously existing system of voting at specially convened branch meetings. The president, Hugh Scanlon, gave a casting vote in favour of a return to the former system. He and others in the Union were immediately attacked by those great defenders of trade union democracy, the *Mail* and *Times* and others. 'Left wing manoeuvre', 'typically underhand' and the rest of the usual twaddle, in spite of the fact that the President had acted, as he believed, scrupulously in accordance with the Union's rules and practice.

What's behind it all? We can leave on one side any idea that these papers are genuinely concerned about making the unions work more effectively and efficiently in their members' interests. The *Economist* of May 24 gives the whole game away in tying up the election of the new General Secretary of the AUEW with the decision to scrap the system of postal balloting. 'First,' it says, 'the good news. Mr John Boyd has been elected General Secretary of the AUEW. . . . Now the bad news, the postal ballot system which helped Mr Boyd to win will be scrapped from 1976 on.' Does anyone remember a campaign run by the right-wing press to change the voting system in the Union when Bill Carron was being elected President? Or when other equally well-known figures in recent trade union history, associated with reactionary policies and undemocratic practices, were continuing to dominate their own unions and the movement generally?

There is certainly ground for argument about what systems of election are best calculated to involve the greatest number of members in the most effective expression of their wishes, but we do not need advice as to what methods we should use from those who have always been most hostile to us. I am sure, for example, that trade unionists in Lowestoft will be astonished to learn that they have an ally for stronger and more effective trade union organisation in James Prior their Tory MP, farmer and now opposition spokesman on employment. On May 20, in the House of Commons, he asked 'if the government will release funds for the holding of postal ballots by trade unions?'

Prior wants the government to discuss with the TUC and the Con-

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federation of British Industry the question of providing funds for the conduct of *all* trade union votes by post. Perhaps Michael Foot should be asked to discuss with the TUC methods of ensuring that the CBI system of appointing its leaders and representatives is publicly examined to see what can be done to guarantee that they are men and women more democratically elected whose ideas, outlook and policies reflect more nearly the national interest, and the interests of the millions working in the firms associated with the CBI rather than the interests of the dominant shareholders in the monopoly companies who at present decide CBI policies.

Eric Jacobs in the *Sunday Times* of May 25 described the outcome of the postal voting issue in the AUEW as 'vital for Britain'. He may well be right. Another commentator said that 'the Engineering Union is the prime political battlefield of the labour movement.' I do not know whether the AUEW or some others will accept this, but it can certainly be taken as a warning that we are again going to face a period of intensified intervention in union affairs by outside and often hostile forces. The *Economist* urged this on May 24, when it said that 'labour movement social-democrats must first gird themselves for battle to reform union elections [with CIA money again?—D.S.], then, even harder, they must gird themselves to join the fight to win those elections. . . . No such general campaign across the trade union board has been attempted since the Gaitskellites joined battle for the unions in 1960-61 over unilateral disarmament.'

I am sure it is not necessary to remind the *Economist* that we have moved on a decade and a half since 1960. It is precisely because of the crisis facing the country and the failure of past and present government to make the sharp changes in policy which the situation requires, that we find this renewed interest in trade union matters, and especially in the affairs of the unions of decisive importance. There is a widespread understanding on the Right of the vital significance of the unions in helping to decide the policies Britain will follow in the future.

It is worthwhile therefore to look at our union electoral systems and see what can be done to make them genuinely more democratic, more reflective of, and responsive to, the needs and wishes of the membership. We would throw out postal balloting to start with, even if the government were paying the cost. If we accept that the most democratic system is the one which has the largest number of members taking part in the administration of their own affairs, then we want methods which will enable this to be done. Postal ballots discourage this rather than otherwise.

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The greatest expression of trade union interest is obviously at the place of work. It is surely here that provision should be made, free of employer and other outside interference, and on a more generous scale than is usual in any form of employment so far, for the establishment and exercise of trade union rights. Nowhere could I find in all the columns of comment on the AUEW decision, and in all the demands for greater democracy in the unions, a proposal that adequate time should be allowed for trade union meetings at work, on the premises and within normal working time. Such a practice would ensure good attendance of members. It would also permit a good return in any union ballots or elections, as the miners with their pit-head balloting have clearly shown. Those who have the courage to state most boldly and most clearly the demands and represent the real interests of their fellow members will be the ones to command the support of the majority.

In the case of the AUEW, it appears that postal voting automatically disfranchises a substantial number of the members. Postal voting in general tends to discourage attendance at branch meetings where much of the important policy and practical work of the unions is decided. For those working in dispersed rather than concentrated conditions, there should be no difficulty in providing machinery for the distribution and collection of voting papers.

The real issues in this campaign are not the desire of the instigators to cherish democracy in the trade unions. On the contrary. They fear that as the crisis of the capitalist system continues to intensify, the unions will be so strong that they will be able to protect British workers from the worst effects of the crisis, and not only this, but go on to secure those changes in policy and the structure of our society which will end once and for all the constantly recurring crises and finally put us on the road to a stable and prosperous future. Their aim is not to strengthen but to weaken the unions and all levels should be on their guard protecting their organisations from outside interference and strengthening them internally by directly involving the largest possible number of members in the conduct of their own affairs.

BRING BACK, BRING BACK

The *Labour Monthly* office is always glad to receive old copies of the journal to help make up sets for bound volumes. We are on the look-out for copies for the years 1921-36, 1940-43 and 1945-49. Please send any you can spare to our office at 134 Ballards Lane, London, N3 2PD.

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Red Friday, July 31, 1925

Fifty years have passed since the British working class reached the highest pinnacle of fighting spirit known since the days of Chartism.

Under the pressure of events—the formation in 1924 of the first Labour government, and its overthrow that autumn by the use of a scandalous forgery, the 'Zinoviev letter'; a long period of decline in British industry, particularly in the coalfields (then entirely in the hands of private companies); and the first official contacts since the Russian revolution between the British and Soviet TUCs, as part of a joint effort for world trade union unity—there rapidly developed in 1925 an unmistakable search among the rank and file for unity of all unions to resist the offensive against workers' living standards which the employers were clearly preparing, with the encouragement of the Tory (Baldwin) government.

For many months miners' lodges and district committees had been declaring their determination not to accept wage cuts or longer hours. When on June 30 the coalowners gave notice to terminate the national agreements, calling for heavy wage cuts and a return to district settlements, the TUC General Council adopted a resolution of complete support for the miners (July 10). A special TUC (called on the question of unemployment) by acclamation endorsed the miners' stand. Then a special committee of the General Council discussed plans with the executives of the railway and transport unions for an embargo on coal if the miners were locked out. The plans were adopted on July 30, the day before the owners' notices were due to expire.

By this time workers' feelings in all industries were running at fever heat—and broke out in universal rage when it became known that on the morning of July 30 Baldwin had told a miners' deputation: 'All the workers of this country have got to take reductions in wages to help put industry on its feet.' The General Council responded with its *Official Instruction to all Railway and Transport Workers*: no wagons containing coal to be moved on the railways after midnight on Friday, July 31; all work on imported coal and on coal for export to cease after the second shift that day; and all engaged in coal deliveries to commercial and industrial concerns to stop work on that Friday night. The effect was shattering!

Only a few days before, Baldwin had stated the government would not grant any subsidy to the industry. Now, early on Friday, July 31, it announced that it would grant a subsidy for nine months—to the coalowners, of course—to enable a Royal Commission to enquire into the coal crisis. The coalowners accordingly withdrew the notice.

The whole labour movement was on its feet. The *Daily Herald*—then a paper sometimes reflecting left-wing opinion—found the necessary words: 'Red Friday!' it proclaimed on its placards. There were not wanting warnings that the movement must be prepared for still more decisive action when the nine months were over. *Labour Monthly* and the *Workers' Weekly*, equally with the miners' Secretary, A. J. Cook, and the then leaders of the General Council, were emphatic about this. And the still bigger confrontation of May 1926 justified the warnings.

But for the moment there was an immense pride in the British working class, a feeling that a landmark in its history had been reached.

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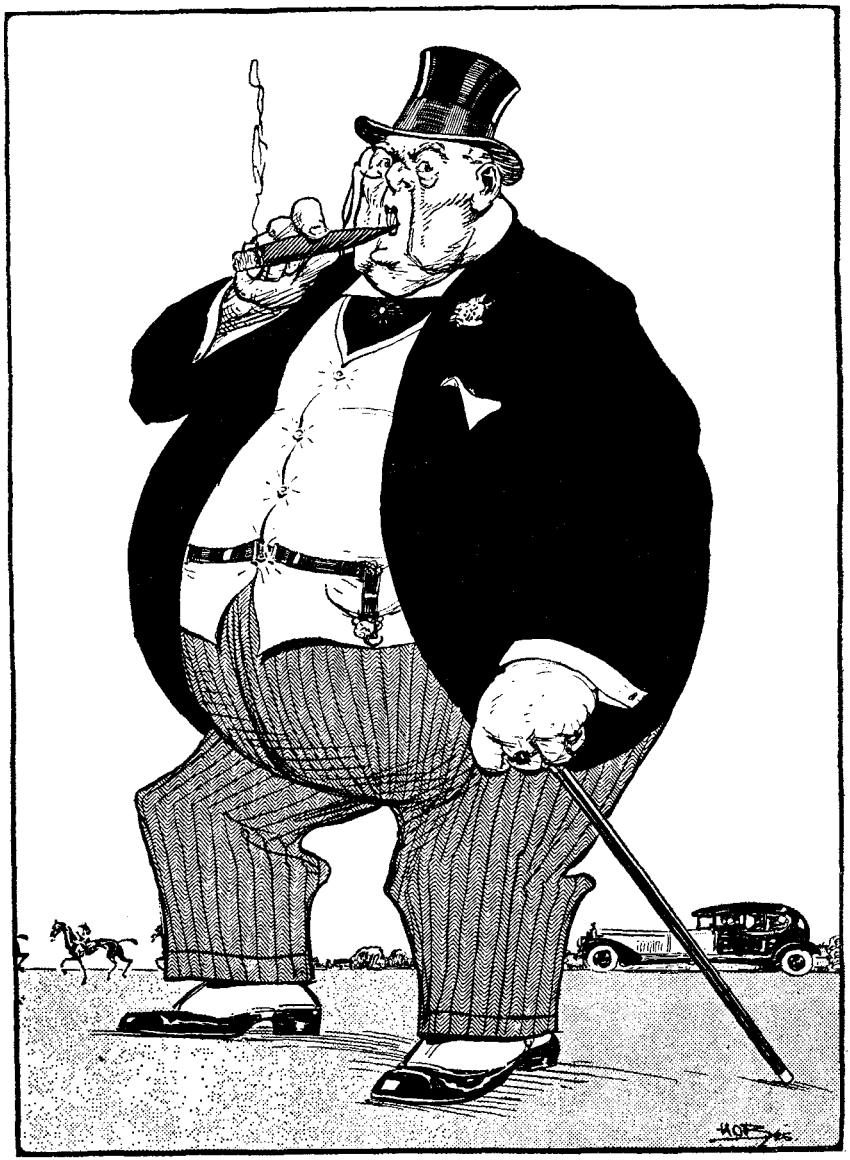

The cartoon reproduced here is one of many which strove to give expression to that feeling. It appeared, over the caption **'The Subsidised Mineowner—Poor Beggar!'**, in a special supplement to the September 1925 congress number of *Trade Union Unity*, the monthly magazine of the International Federation of Trade Unions. A.R.

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SAD CYPRUS

Lena Jeger MP

CYPRUS is a sore place on the conscience of the world. For many people in Britain it may be a far away island of which they know little or nothing. In fact, Cyprus is at present the symbolic touchstone of international affairs: it is in Cyprus that the credibility of the United Nations is on trial together with the meaningfulness of the Commonwealth, the honour of treaties, the assertion of human rights. For all these reasons it is as important in modern international politics as was Czechoslovakia in 1938.

Cyprus is a small island, about half the size of Wales, at the eastern end of the Mediterranean. It has always been an orphan ruled by whatever power happened to be in the ascendant in the area. During the Crusades, Richard Coeur de Lion took possession for a time and gave it to his wife for a wedding present. When Venice was Queen of the Mediterranean she ruled Cyprus, and the walls built by the Venetians can still be seen in Famagusta and Nicosia. In 1571, when the Turks were invading Europe, they occupied Cyprus with terrible brutality. They settled about 20,000 Turks there and these are the ancestors of the Turkish Cypriots. In 1878, after the Treaty of Berlin, Cyprus was ceded to Britain in some complicated horse-dealing.

And there we stayed, the imperial power, until the so-called independence of 1960. And during these years, although language and religion kept the two communities apart in many ways, there was a rubbing along, the sort of *modus vivendi* which any neighbours living in a small place together have to manage. I say 'so-called' independence because of what has happened.

I was in Cyprus and present when the treaties were signed. For the UK the ex-Governor, Hugh Foot (Lord Caradon), signed, together with ministers from Greece and Turkey, a guarantee of the integrity and independence of the new country. With hindsight one can say that this treaty was doomed. But on that hot, happy morning in beautiful Cyprus the bells rang and hands were shaken and the Union Jack on Government House was run down to make way for the unlovely flag of independent Cyprus on what was to be called the Presidential Palace—alas now a shattered ruin.

What went wrong? Everything that went wrong came from outside Cyprus. Left to themselves, the Greek Cypriots and the Turkish Cypriots could have carried on, growing their melons, tending their

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flocks, running their hotels. They worked together in the docks, in the hospitals, in the courts. I remember vividly going to a hospital in Paphos some years ago and, because I certainly can't tell a Greek Cypriot from a Turkish Cypriot, I asked the ward Sister whether she was Greek or Turkish. 'Why do you ask?' she said. 'It doesn't matter here. But if you really want to know I am Turkish. My staff nurse is Greek. The anaesthetist is Armenian. The surgeon is Greek and the physician is Turkish. The cook is a Turk and the caretaker is Greek. The patients are about half and half, but apart from the language it never registers with us.'

Of course there were tensions. But I insist that they came from outside. There is no space here for long history, but it is absolutely clear that the fascist colonels in Athens organised the Samson coup in 1974. The non-democratic Turkish government was alert to exploit any trouble. The pity and the misery of Cyprus is that her people have always been used to exploit the internal troubles of other countries.

Under the Treaty of Guarantee of course the British government should have intervened against Samson. I think there would have been little or no struggle. A few old tanks rolling down the road from Akritiri would have been effective. If not, what is the use of British sovereign bases in Cyprus? If our expensive troops cannot even protect local undertakings, how on earth are they going to be any use elsewhere?

So the Turks flew in with their bombs and bombardment. I have read many Turkish accounts about how they had to come to protect the Turkish minority in Cyprus. In fact, the Turkish Cypriots had never been safer. It was the Greek Cypriots who were killing each other in those few mad days. Will we ever know what the CIA and Nato were working out with the Greek colonels? We only know that, for the hundredth time in history, the Cypriot people were sacrificed.

And now we have a situation where the UN, supported by Greece, Turkey and the UK and US, has passed a resolution asking that all foreign troops should leave the island and all the refugees should go home. That resolution was passed in November 1974. No action has been taken to implement it. I know because I was in Cyprus in April and I saw the thousands of refugees in their tents, deprived of their homes. I talked to UK citizens who had made their homes in Cyprus and had been evicted, their homes looted, their property destroyed. The Turkish Cypriots who have been moved to the north to occupy the homes of banished Greek Cypriots are not happy. These are a peasant people. They are married to their land, the land where their

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ancestors have planted trees and tended flocks. A strange, new piece of land, albeit bigger, means less. People, like trees, have roots.

So I was not surprised to get messages from Turkish Cypriots transferred to the north. 'I don't like it here,' one man in Famagusta told me. 'I have a bigger home, but it is not my home. Anyhow, the Turkish soldiers stole everything and it is just four walls. I have no animals, no crops. I am out of work. I dare not let my daughters go out because of the Turkish soldiers. They are not like us. When I see how they behave I do not feel that I am a Turk.'

So what do we do? I believe that we have got to defuse Cyprus. Everything that has gone wrong in the island is because of its use by outside powers in their own interests. At present it is a Nato toy. I do not know why the British Foreign Office is in love with Turkey: when, in the history of any fight for freedom, has Turkey been on our side? Or on the right side? But now there is an official view that the Turks might be splendid fighters against the Russians—look how good they were in Korea, I am told. But surely we are working for a detente, and the idea of our support for Turkey to fight Russia is a nonsense and a contradiction. It is also a nonsense for the poor people of Turkey. Here is a country of miserable living standards, spending a stupid amount of GNP on military purposes, while the children are uneducated, the women are enslaved and poverty is a disgrace. Only the arms dealers and the opium growers in Turkey are rich.

So we have to press our government to implement the UN resolution. We have to refuse to sell arms to Turkey. On May 10-11 in London an international conference on Cyprus was held and representatives from twenty-four countries attended. We asked, as a priority, that the UN conference resolution on Cyprus should be implemented. We are planning to set up a standing committee to implement this purpose. What stands in our way, in the way of a UN resolution? The answer is Nato. At present the British government is putting its fantasies about pro-Turkish anti-Russian confrontations (in harmony with Kissinger and his totally discredited foreign policies) ahead of its simpler obligations to a Commonwealth country, which has signed guarantees written on its books.

If we fail Cyprus, we fail the whole concept of UN international responsibility. We then concede that people and their lives matter less than the theories of Nato and the policies of the CIA. If the UN resolution on Cyprus is ignored, why should anything else from the UN be respected? I come back to where I began: Cyprus is a symbol. And if we get it wrong, there will be a lot more wrong in the future.

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RAILWAYMEN'S POLICY

P. Way

LOOKING at the situation in the National Union of Railwaymen, following the retiral of Sir Sidney Greene after seventeen years as its General Secretary, we headed our article in the July 1974 issue of *Labour Monthly*: 'NUR—Start of a New Era?'

That there is a stirring in the NUR is already evident. At the moment of writing their executive committee has voted by an overwhelming 21 to 3 for strike support of their pay claim to start on June 23. There is no point here in trying to forecast all the twists and turns that may take place before a settlement is reached. All kinds of pressure will be applied on the NUR leadership to weaken their resolve. But one thing is certain. The outcome will be of very great importance, not only for the NUR, but to the whole trade union movement.

It was already clear months ago that the railwaymen had been selected as the section where the wave of 'excessive' wage settlements which followed the ending of statutory wage control had to be brought to an end, and a new pattern of more moderate pay deals established. All the big guns of the government and press had been mobilised for the operation. The Prime Minister and the Chancellor of the Exchequer quite blatantly intervened during negotiations, warning that if the railwaymen pressed their claim too far there would be reprisals in the form of reduced railway activity and less jobs.

In fact, the railwaymen's claim is quite modest in relation to recent pay deals and will certainly not match inflation over the next twelve months. The British Railways Board (BRB) had offered just over £1 to the lowest-paid railman and this had been improved by the Railway Staffs National Tribunal to £2.65. For the majority of grades represented by the NUR the new money element is around £4 a week and the union wants another £2 on top of this to retain their relativity with the miners and other public service workers. Their claim is that the bottom grade should have £34.65, a guard £41.85 and the driver £54.15 for forty hours.

Who has won this particular round of the wages battle will be known by the time this reaches the reader. The experience will certainly provide a very rich background for the 77 rank-and-file NUR delegates who will meet in mid-July for their annual conference.

At the centre of their debate on future wage policy will be a

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Feltham Branch resolution which 'rejects the social contract', and an amendment by Derby 3 which says 'that there is a need for some kind of social contract if we are to work towards a fair and just society.' Delegates are not likely to forget that it was the BRB who used the social contract to justify the derisory offer of £1.05 to the lowest-paid grade. True, Professor McArthy, in the most liberal interpretation to date, found that the social contract was loosely worded and by stretching it to the limit awarded £2.65 to the bottom grade. The aim of the government and employers is to take this elastic out of the social contract and make it a more rigid instrument for wage restraint.

No matter what confusion may surround the debate on the social contract, delegates will have the real issue before them in Chalk Farm's resolution which states 'that as long as the profit motive and the private accumulation of wealth is the dominant factor in the economy . . . we insist that any wage settlement achieves a real improvement in our standard of living.'

The other major domestic issue before the annual conference is transport policy. Naturally, the NUR is preoccupied with retaining an important role for the railways within the country's changing transport system. Sometimes this is crudely expressed as rail versus road. This poses a relatively new problem for the NUR. Today, one-third of its membership no longer work on the railways, the bulk of these being connected with road haulage, the buses and the docks. This is reflected in apparently contradictory resolutions. One calls for 'a stop to the building of motorways', and another for 'increased investment in the nationalised rail and road sector'. This division has enabled successive governments to maintain a transport system based on intense competition between road and rail and within the road haulage undertakings, to the detriment of all the workers concerned. The solution lies in the nationalisation of road haulage as the basis of an integrated transport system, and this is touched on in a number of resolutions. But this is likely to become part of future Labour legislation only if the rail unions and the Transport and General Workers' Union can come to some agreement on the respective roles of each form of transport. The initiative for this could best come from the NUR with its membership in the different sectors.

Of the major political issues, two resolutions call for cuts to arms expenditure. At last year's conference a similar resolution was defeated. With the sharpening of the crisis and the intensified government economies at the expense of the public services, delegates

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this year will have a much clearer choice. Three resolutions call for a Bill of Rights and the release of political prisoners in Northern Ireland. The NUR has always taken a progressive stand on Irish affairs, and the resolutions will provide them with the opportunity to take a fresh initiative in a very critical period. Two resolutions on Chile reflect the strong internationalist tradition of the union.

Perhaps the most important political resolutions are those opposing the Common Market. Coming immediately after the referendum, they will enable delegates to show that the battle for a socialist order of society, enshrined in NUR rules from its inception, continues today.

Document of the Day

PEOPLES, PARLIAMENTS AND GOVERNMENTS

THE bloodiest and most destructive war in world history ended thirty years ago. The victory over fascism and militarism in this greatest of wars has become an important landmark in mankind's destinies. For future ages it has left a deep feeling of pride and sorrow in the memory of freedom-loving peoples: pride, because forces which were bringing slavery to entire nations under the black banner of fascism, racism and chauvinism, were routed; sorrow, because the victory took the heaviest toll. It was paid with the lives of tens of millions of men, women and children, with colossal destructions and devastation of many states.

The scale of the losses sustained is enormous. The burden of the sacrifices is immeasurable. But they were not in vain.

Soldiers from all continents who fought against the armies of Hitler Germany and militarist Japan, partisans, resistance fighters, underground anti-fascists, people who forged victory in the rear, did not spare their lives in battle and did not spare themselves for the sake of defending their motherland, their ideals, their homes and their families. They wanted to do away with fascism and militarism for good, and to rid mankind of the horrors of war for ever. They went into this great battle hoping to win a stable, just and democratic peace. And their heroic efforts have borne fruit, have resulted in great changes. Social and political changes of the greatest significance have taken place, and the objective opportunity of banishing world wars from the life of mankind has been created for the first time in history.

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The thirtieth anniversary of the end of the second world war is a special occasion. We are celebrating it in a new, more favourable atmosphere. Europe and the world as a whole have really come closer to the implementation of that lofty goal toward which the peoples of the anti-Hitler coalition were striving. The principles of equality, sovereignty, abstention from the use of force are being increasingly asserted in relations between states. The road to this has not been easy. A difficult and stubborn struggle has been going on for all these 30 years. And today it is not yet over.

The cold war delayed for decades the construction of the edifice of peace. Aggressive and reactionary circles were trying from a position of strength to impose a world order which would be radically against the interests of peoples and social progress. This has led to an unprecedented arms race, using the latest scientific achievements, and has brought the world more than once to the verge of a new military catastrophe.

We also have no right to forget that over the past 30 years one country or another, sometimes even entire regions of the world, have been stained with blood, becoming the arena of hostilities claiming millions of lives. Even today the peoples of Arab and other countries are forced to wage a severe struggle against reactionary forces, often taking up arms in order to have an opportunity themselves to determine the road of their development, in conditions of a just peace, independence and freedom.

However, since the second world war the deadly rocket-nuclear weapons have been banned for use through the efforts of the socialist states, through the efforts of all those who hold dear the cause of peace and who have been actively fighting for it. Realistically-minded political circles of the West have also played an important role in this.

On the day of the thirtieth anniversary of the great victory, the Soviet people, the Communist Party, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and the Soviet government call on the peoples of the world, parliaments and governments of all countries to put an end for good to the dangerous policy of the cold war. . . .

For three decades mankind has been saved from world war. This is a great achievement of the forces of peace, and its significance penetrates ever deeper the consciousness of the peoples. Never before has so much been done for consolidating peace as over these past years. Thanks to the consistent peace policy of the socialist states, as a result of the active steps of democratic forces in all countries, as well as of the realistic stand taken by governments who have become aware of the danger of continuing the cold war, the

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situation in the international arena has radically changed.

Historic agreements determining the process of international detente have been signed. Of special significance are the agreements between the world's two biggest states—the USSR and the United States—on prevention of nuclear war and on limitation of strategic weapons. Important treaties and agreements are in force between the USSR and France, between the USSR and the FRG, between other socialist countries and the FRG in addition to the quadripartite agreement on West Berlin. The first steps have been made along the road of limiting the arms race. The search for settling existing international conflicts by peaceful means is under way.

Such elements as recognition of the inviolability of frontiers, solution of disputed questions at negotiation tables, regular consultations, long-term economic co-operation, exchange in the achievements of science and culture, are being ever more asserted in relations between states with differing social systems.

The All-European Conference of States is nearing completion—an unprecedented event in the history of the continent which was the chief theatre of the two world wars and, for many centuries, the knot of the most explosive international contradictions. The success of such a conference, the realisation of its recommendations, will open up a new stage in the life of Europe and will signify the victory of the ideals of peace and reason. And this in its turn will tell favourably on the development of international relations throughout the world.

Throughout the world, in the main, an end has been made of the direct colonial rule which served as a constant source of acute tension, and a legal reason for the armed national liberation struggle of the oppressed peoples. The last colonial empire, that of Portugal, has disintegrated.

All these important changes are the embodiment of the will of the peoples for peace and progress. They prove that the prevention of wars among states is not a Utopia but a real perspective and a quite attainable goal. The far-reaching reconstruction of international relations on the basis of the principles of peaceful coexistence has started. It can and must be continued and brought to final success. This is required both by the memory of those who fell and the vital interests of those who are alive.

In the present day epoch peace is a necessary condition for mankind's social progress, for ensuring the sovereign right of the peoples to build their life just as they want it. The entire development in the three post-war decades is clear evidence of this.

In the conditions of peace the gigantic growth of contemporary

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scientific and technological knowledge, and the powerful development of productive forces connected with it, make it possible to transform the material culture and life of the people. The achievements of the scientific and technological revolution make possible the radical improvement of living conditions on earth, elimination of hunger, poverty, mass diseases. And at the same time the great social changes and transformations which have taken place during these 30 years have shown, in the experience of a number of countries, that it is possible to subdue the anti-human forces of reaction and on this basis to avert negative consequences in the scientific-technical revolution.

The achievements of many peoples since the end of the second world war have been enormous. But they could have been immeasurably larger if the colossal resources of intellect and energy, lost over that period in the manufacture of the tools of death and destruction, had been used for constructive purposes.

Nevertheless, influential forces are at work stubbornly striving to stop progress towards a lasting peace. Unusually large stockpiles of weapons have been accumulated, including those of rocket-nuclear type. The arms race goes on. All this causes deep and well-founded concern, requiring greater efforts in the struggle for peace, cessation of the arms race and disarmament in order to put a halt to the material preparation for war.

The Soviet people, the Soviet state, on whom the main burden of the fight against fascism fell, again declare their firm intention to do everything possible in order, jointly with other peoples and states, to banish war from the life of mankind. Expressing the will and the ardent desire of all Soviet people, we shall work

for complete and all-round assertion in international relations of the principles of peaceful coexistence of states with differing social systems;

to ensure the irreversibility of the process of international detente;

for limitation and cessation of the race in arms of all forms and types, and steady progress towards general and complete disarmament;

for elimination of the existing hotbeds of war danger, with obligatory recognition and respect of the right of every people to independence and equal security;

for creation of regional and general systems of security and equal co-operation among states;

for all-round development of mutually beneficial links in the field of economics, science, technology and culture, observing the indisputable right of each country to control their natural resources, protecting their laws and traditions;

to ensure real guarantees for the effective and equal participation of all countries and peoples in world politics;

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for elimination of neo-colonialism and any kind of discrimination against any country whatsoever;

for creation of an international climate in which potential aggressors, those fond of adventures and sabre-rattling, will meet with a resolute rebuff everywhere, and in which security and confidence in a peaceful future will in fact be to the benefit of all countries and peoples.

On behalf of 250 million Soviet people we call on all to whom the planet's future is dear: let us do everything to make it peaceful. . . .

We address this call to all peoples, parliaments and governments and, above all, directly and officially, to all those who are vested with the responsibility of representing their states and the public of their countries in the international arena. We count on their response which shall be worthy of the importance of the problem, and we call for efficient action for the sake of a lasting and reliable peace.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union | **The Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet** | **The Government of the Soviet Union**

LABOUR MONTHLY FIFTY YEARS AGO

To those who are misled by the sedulously instilled myths of law and order, it would be well to study a little the history of the British bourgeoisie for the past three centuries (which in bloody violence could hardly be equalled by any ruling class since the Roman empire), as well as the action of this same bourgeoisie as a ruling class in the empire outside Britain today. They would speedily learn the mailed-fist basis which lies behind the velvet speeches of a Baldwin. In the recent Bloemfontein shootings of unarmed Africans, it was proved that the shooting came, not from the police, but from the howling mob of white exploiters with guns, whom the police chief declared it impossible to control. The Amritsar massacre was rewarded with a prize of ten thousand pounds for the chief butcher from the ready purses of the British bourgeoisie—ever open for such a purpose; while the Indian who mildly criticised it in a book was subjected by the British courts to a fantastic fine of thirty thousand pounds. In America, the unchecked lynchings, exploits of the Ku Klux Klan and armies of private gunmen of the big industrialists (all which the executive of this most powerful capitalist state find it 'impossible' to control) furnish a further instructive picture of the workings of modern millionaire-democracy. The British and American bourgeoisie more than any other—from the very completeness of their power—regard 'law and order' as only existing for the subjection of the rest of the world and never as applying to themselves. The Ulster example before the war was only a foretaste of the atmosphere, on a comparatively trifling issue. When their wealth—the whole object and meaning of their existence—becomes at last in question, the nature of the fight will soon be clear.

(From 'Notes of the Month' by RPD, *Labour Monthly*, July 1925)

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THE ATTILA

The *Cyprus Report on the Attila 'Peacemakers': July 20-October 1, 1974* is a 110-page account—containing many illustrations, facsimile reproductions of articles which appeared at the time in the British press, and clearly presented information and figures—of the effects of the Turkish invasion of Cyprus in July 1974. The book is available in limited numbers free of charge from the Press and Information Office, Cyprus High Commission, 93 Park Street, London, W1Y 4ET.

This photograph is from p 49 of the book. Petrakis, aged 11, and his 8-year-old brother Costakis Souppouris are the only survivors of a family of 15 people. They were all shot down by Turkish soldiers: a grandmother of 82, her husband of 86, the boys' mother and father, uncles and aunts and sister aged 6.

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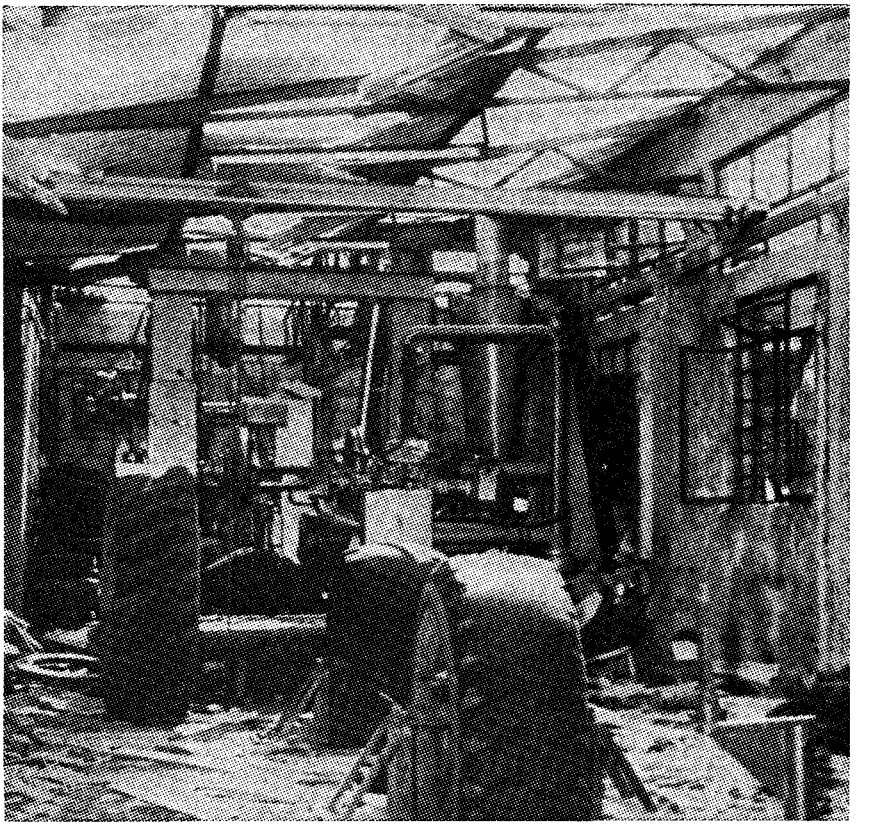
ACEMAKERS'



'In effect the territory claimed for the 18 per cent strong Turkish-Cypriot minority was to be 34 per cent of the island. What is more it was to include the most fertile lands producing 70 per cent of the agricultural produce of the country, 60 per cent of the industry, 80 per cent of the tourist business, 100 per cent of the mining industry, the main fresh water reserves and the only deep water port of the island. All that under the pretext of protecting a small minority. Some "protection" indeed' (Greek Minister of Foreign Affairs, G. Mavros, at the 29th UN Assembly).

The picture taken from p 69 of *The Attila 'Peacemakers'* illustrates the severe destruction suffered by industry in Cyprus. Thirty per cent of the factories free of Turkish occupation were badly damaged by bombing. The remaining 70 per cent are doubling their output to save the Cyprus economy.

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THE LAW OF RAPE

F. H. Amphlett Micklewright
Barrister-at-Law

A GREAT deal of stir both among lawyers and others has been caused by a recent decision of the House of Lords concerning rape. Put briefly, the court ruled that a rape is not committed if the man has cause to believe, however unreasonably, that the woman consented to the intercourse when in fact she did not do so. It is quite clear that a serious result will follow. The test is no longer that of 'the reasonable man', the old lawyers' fiction which demands that an objective approach should be taken to the evidence. It is merely that of the subjective belief held by the man who committed the rape and whether the available evidence supports his contention of true, as opposed to reasonable, belief. The dangers are obvious and the case will be heavily weighted on the side of the man when it comes to be summed up to the jury. It must be recalled, however, that the plea did not prevail in regard to the particular appeal which the House of Lords was hearing, and it might be contended that the opinion expressed was merely *obiter dictum* without relevance to the case being tried. Yet *obiter dicta* from the House of Lords will carry considerable weight and one or two appeals have been allowed because the Court of Appeal has acted upon the pronouncement. Already demands have been made for statutory intervention and Mr Jack Ashley MP has promoted a private member's bill to this end.

Rape is an old common law crime, and means generally the obtaining of sexual intercourse by forcing the woman to act against her will. As a common law crime, the evidence does not require corroboration although, in modern times, the conviction will be quashed if the trial judge did not warn the jury about the dangers of acting upon uncorroborated evidence. In this respect it differs from the treatment of other sexual offences brought together under the Sexual Offences Act 1956, for this statute demands a high level of corroboration in order to obtain a conviction. Of course, it must be recalled that corroboration does not mean an independent person as witness. Anything or any object can supply the need within an appropriate context. In former times, rape was a capital offence which became a felony under later classification. The Criminal Justice Act 1967 has abolished the old distinction of felony but has made it an indictable offence. Penetration is necessary and any lesser

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sexual activity will rank as the crime of indecent assault.

The whole matter is of some seriousness if only because the crime of rape would seem to be an activity which takes place all too often in modern society. As the law has come to understand it, and if the common law really does say what the House of Lords recently spelt out from precedent, the evidence of the man is placed on a far stronger basis than is that of the woman. The mere fact that he thought, however wrongly, that she had consented is enough. It is for the woman to prove that she did not consent and to make clear the fact that such was her state of mind. Doubtless she would be able to do so if she could show that she put up a determined physical resistance. The fact that she might have some previous history of sexual intercourse with various men is irrelevant for purposes of defence. For example, it has been decided that it is possible to rape a prostitute. But in many modern cases a man will produce some weapon, such as a knife, and will make violent threats. Overcome by fear, induced through the threats, she undresses and permits intercourse to take place. Her final conduct might be held to have led the man, however wrongly, to infer that she consented in the last resort. Not only could such a verdict lead to a gross miscarriage of justice upon the facts, but a most undesirable double standard could arise whereby the moral attitudes of the woman were of lesser importance than were those of the man.

Following feudal precedents, woman is the chattel of the man, and popular morality has too often followed this precedent. For example, married women could not hold property of their own until 1883. A wife was not free to make her own contracts until 1935 and a wife could not sue her husband in tort until 1963. It is only very recently that the problem has come to be tackled in which a married woman automatically assumes the domicile of the husband whereby, in the case of a desertion, the wife might find her marriage subordinated to the laws of some far-off country which she has never visited. Again, a strict chastity was demanded in the woman by conventional morality. Loss of virginity was commonly held to ruin her matrimonial prospects. Until 1923, it was impossible for the wife to divorce the husband save for adultery accompanied with cruelty, whereas the erring wife could be divorced for simple adultery alone for she might produce a child by her lover and it might pass off as a legal heir. Various modern works have illustrated the clandestine influence played by the brothel and the kept mistress in Victorian society, whilst the attitude of Edward VII towards women was notorious. It was a society possessing a double standard and it is interesting that

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the Chastity of Woman Act 1892 was not accompanied by any sort of male counterpart. This branch of the law still remains as it did in this regard.

The coming of the permissive society within a capitalist order, has swept away very much of the social opinion upon which the former society based its sexual *mores*. Marriage and divorce have adopted new shapes within the world of today, and the whole structure of divorce law has been changed within recent years. But the common law remains the same unless statute imposes a new law which overrides it. As a result the old double standard ideas can still linger on. It seems that they have done so in the recent definition of rape.

Nor must it be forgotten that the common law was made by the rulers within a class society. The feudal position of women was due to nothing less than the class structure of feudalism whereby the woman was but the chattel of the man. Within a feudal or post-feudal society, the view of the family as a tribe or a clan prevailed and assisted this conclusion. The individualised unit known to sociologists as a 'nuclear family' only came to develop in modern society under urban conditions. Much social history is the story of the feudal and post-feudal exploitation of women, a position attacked by Mary Wollstonecraft at the end of the eighteenth century, an attack in which she was championed by the philosopher, Godwin, and the poet, Shelley. The liberation of women was a cause pleaded by John Stuart Mill. Later, it became part of the rising socialist creed and was expounded by Karl Marx and his followers. Within a socialist society such as the Soviet Union, the equality of women with men became a part of the foundations of the social structure. But it has still to be achieved fundamentally within Western capitalist societies. In the last resort, the question is not so much one of 'women's lib' as of the class structure. For example, the working class woman marrying before 1883 saw all of her property pass to her husband who could do what he liked with it. But this was an affront to the aristocratic bride who could afford the best legal advice. She was protected by a whole series of marriage settlements and her property was put under a restraint upon anticipation. Hence the husband was powerless and a body of trustees protected the wife's interests. Needless to say, the ruling class was satisfied and was not over-concerned as to what happened to those working class sisters who could not afford the lawyers' fees. It is too often forgotten that both common law and equity were shaped by the ruling classes to their own ends and that in changed times they are still of service to

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the ruling caste. It will, for example, be less than likely that the aristocratic rapist will rape a woman of his own class. A court might easily take a Victorian view, the insulting attitude that a working class girl will be proud to consent to the wishes of the aristocrat. It is permissible to enquire how far many of the Victorian seductions of this class came in fact perilously near to the crime of rape.

Another question over rape which calls for enquiry is that of the humiliating position of the victim. She must lay a charge and her story will be made the subject of close police enquiries. An arrest takes place and a charge is brought in court. Being a serious indictable offence, it will go to the Crown Court for trial. The man claims that he has a belief, however unreasonable, that she had consented at the time when intercourse took place. The victim will now be subjected to a gruelling cross-examination by counsel for the defence. This is as it should be for the accused is perfectly entitled to a fair trial, and the weight of the evidence must be tested. Nothing must be done by any reform of procedure to assist the blackmailing or hysterical type of woman who bases an accusation of rape upon far different circumstances, and it must never be forgotten that plenty of such cases have come before the courts. A very different picture may emerge when counsel for the prosecution has pressed a few questions upon the self-styled injured maiden. But in the case of a genuine charge, the woman is subjected to a procedural investigation which must mean humiliation. As a result, it is recorded that many possible rape complaints are never made, simply because the woman cannot face the enquiry. One step might be taken towards reform in these matters. The name and address of the woman prosecuting should be kept private. It will not then decorate the Sunday newspapers and become the talk of the neighbourhood for weeks on end. If the man is acquitted, the judge should then order the publication of the prosecutor's name, thus making things difficult for the woman who brings frivolous or blackmailing charges. But this reform should be made within a statutory law of rape which demands a high level of corroboration, as in the Sexual Offences Act 1956, and which restores the objective test to the vital question concerning whether or not the woman consented to what in fact took place. One further corner of the common law will then have been reshaped in the interests of sex equality and of justice. The task of the court in a sexual charge is difficult enough, for such charges are among the easiest to bring and the most difficult to refute. But the protection of justice is not attained by merely opening a large loophole to the male defendant.

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Women in the Thirties: A Strike-Breaking Bill

DURING recent months there have been a large number of strikes amongst the women who have resisted the masters' attempts to extend the 'More Loom System' in Lancashire, the 'speed-up' and wage-cutting in the clothing industry, and the Bedaux system in the hosiery and engineering industries. Many of these strikes have been carried through successfully because the unemployed women have refused to scab on them. But the new Bill, with its clause about 'proving that the applicant cannot find suitable employment' can be used during strike periods to force the unemployed woman to act as a 'strike breaker'.

There have been many complaints from girls who have been transferred from their homes, that they are being sacked on the excuse of 'misbehaviour' or 'failure to do their work' or that they have been compelled by the bad conditions and wages to hand in their notice. Girls, hundreds of miles from their home towns, are thus left penniless for six weeks. The new Bill will deprive any girl who leaves her job twice in a year of all benefit for a period of six months. The hundred thousand girls in the catering trades will thus be placed absolutely at the mercy of unscrupulous hotel and boarding-house keepers. The Bill will be used by the employers to compel the girls who have been drafted into the industrial areas of Yorkshire, London and Birmingham to submit to their terms or starve. At the Court of Referees at Stepney in June 1933, an applicant was deprived of six weeks' benefit for 'misconduct'. The facts are that this woman was sacked at a minute's notice, without explanation. Three weeks before, it had been suggested by the firm that her set of people should accept a reduction in wages. This had followed her working on piece work where she had been able to considerably increase her wages.

Miss B, of London, who had worked in one shop for eight years, was assaulted by her forewoman on two occasions. She retaliated and was sacked. The Court of Referees thereupon stopped her three weeks' pay.

Mrs L, who belongs to Yorkshire, was working in London for 14s per week. Her mistress took a boarding house three times as large, and got no additional help. Mrs L stuck it for a month and then asked for a rise. She was refused and so she left. She was later offered a job at 12s a week, with no uniform, and refused this. The Court of Referees nevertheless disallowed

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her for six weeks on the grounds that 'she left her employment without just cause', and also for six weeks on the grounds that she refused to apply for a suitable situation.

(From *The Unemployment Bill and Women in Industry*, The National United Front Committee, 1934)

CHANCES LOST AND WON

Bill Baker

THE defeat of fascism in 1945 by the powers of the anti-Hitler coalition marked a turning point in the history of the world that was second in importance only to 1917. If 1917 heralded the beginning of the world-wide transformation from the epoch of capitalism to that of socialism, 1945 marked a new stage in that revolutionary process. Although it had suffered terrible losses the Soviet Union, due to its decisive role in the defeat of Nazism, emerged from the war with its international position greatly strengthened. Its prestige and authority had risen to such an extent that, from now on, no important matter in world affairs could be solved without its participation.

All over the world popular, democratic movements and working class movements emerged from the fight against fascism much strengthened and determined to carry through fundamental changes so that fascism would never again be able to threaten the world. In many countries the communist parties, who everywhere had taken a leading part in the anti-Nazi fight, had posts in the first post-war governments.

Britain 1945

Britain was no exception to the general tendency. The election of the Labour government in July 1945, with a huge parliamentary majority, was the direct political expression of it. The British people rejected Winston Churchilll and the Tories in 1945 because they rejected the old world of the pre-war days with its mass unemployment, its inequalities and its ruling class politicians who, in their anti-Soviet and anti-communist blindness, had played such a large part in bringing the war about. They voted Labour because Labour seemed to provide an alternative and the Labour Party had, as the Labour programme put it, 'a common bond with the working people of all countries who have achieved new influence through the struggle against the Nazi tyranny.' The people believed that a Labour government would preserve the alliance with the Soviet Union, which was

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so necessary for world peace, and ensure that there would be great changes in favour of the working people in British society. Many believed that in voting Labour they were voting for socialism.

A glance at the press in 1945 bears witness to the radicalisation of opinion. When the Soviet football team, 'Dynamo', toured Britain in November 1945, the *Daily Mirror*'s columns were full of reports of grounds packed out and scenes of great enthusiasm. When they played Chelsea, 'a hundred thousand people fought for a view of the game,' and 'those who failed to get in broke down the doors of nearby houses and ran upstairs in the hope of seeing the game from the roof' (result 3:3). And even when the match with Arsenal was rendered impossible by a thick London pea-souper, 54,000 turned up to a match they could not see. The *Daily Mirror* had caught the mood in May 1945 with an expressive headline: 'Anti-Soviet Whispers in US Must Stop—Big Business Far Too Hostile.' The appreciation of the necessity for co-operation with the Soviet Union in the post-war world found expression far beyond working class circles. The respectable *Times*, for instance, in 1945 was also calling for 'reaffirming the solid foundations of future security in Europe in the lasting unity of the principal three powers.' As for the readiness for change among the people at large, the experience related by a Labour Party member still serving in the army education corps at the time, and who thus had wide opportunity for contact with the men, is typical. When he asked servicemen if they were going to support Labour and Attlee, the reply, more often than not, was that Labour wasn't left enough for them—they'd rather give their vote to old Joe Stalin and communism.

Such was the wave of radicalism on which the Labour government of Clement Attlee rode to power. This Labour government had a very real and historic chance to begin the transformation of British society in the direction of socialism. Within three years, i.e. by 1948, that same government had gone back on its own programme and the wishes of its electorate so thoroughly that to be suspected of pro-communism provided enough ground for expulsion from the Labour Party. Behind the people's backs even the most elementary interests of the British people for security were sold out in the interests of anti-Sovietism, as the Labour government eagerly offered Britain as an aircraft carrier for the US atom-bombers, thus making Britain number one target in the event of any conflict. In three years a Labour government, elected on a platform of change, with 'a common bond with the working people of all countries', had tied itself economically and politically to the cold war warriors of the US

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trusts and monopolies so effectively that Britain's foreign policy from that day on has always been an echo of that of Washington. True the government of 1945-51 introduced some spectacular reforms that have had a decisive influence on the social life of the people: the introduction of the health service, the education reform and a series of nationalisation measures. But, whatever the impression at the time, from the vantage point of 30 years on, it can be seen that in no way did any of these measures threaten the fabric of British capitalism. And, of course, because you cannot have a reactionary foreign policy and, at the same time, a progressive home policy, the reforming zeal of the government after three years was much diminished and, in the face of American financial control and the demands of a soaring defence budget in the latter years of the Labour administration, even that which had been achieved became threatened through lack of funds.

The results of betrayal by the right-wing Labour government can be summarised as follows: (1) The cold war (a too comforting expression which means, of course, almost hot real war). Without British help the US would have been hard put to it to launch, alone, its world-wide campaign to contain and roll back communism. (2) A continual deepening of the crisis of Britain's economy due to the deployment of resources for military uses, with naturally corresponding social effects on the standard of living, social services, etc. (3) In the political field the failure of Labour at the polls in 1951, and 13 years of Tory government. (4) No progress towards socialism: instead a continual worsening of Britain's economic position so that the world power of 1945 has become the 'sick man of Europe' of 1975, more famous for its high rate of inflation than for anything else.

Such were the truly momentous consequences of betrayal by the right-wing leadership of Clement Attlee. The rejection of the historic chance of 1945 for a decisive break with the past and a move towards socialism was in some ways even more damaging to the labour movement, and to the world at large, than the betrayal by the right wing in 1931. But it was part of the same pattern. The same pattern as is today being displayed by the present right-wing leadership under Wilson in regard to the Common Market.

Germany 1945

Hitler's thousand year Reich had been smashed by the powers of the anti-Hitler coalition—Britain, the US and the USSR. The red flag of the Soviet Union waved over the Reichstag building amidst the

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rubble of the German capital. Nazism was militarily defeated but its consequences were not so easily overcome: the towns lay in ruins and, worst of all, the people were also in ruins ideologically, deeply affected by the poison of twelve years of Nazism.

But there were healthy forces in Germany, forces who had never accepted Hitler, which had struggled against Nazism. Chief amongst these was the Communist Party of Germany (the KPD) which had never ceased to exist despite all the Gestapo's efforts. In Germany itself communists formed the nucleus of resistance organisations in which social-democrats, Christians and other anti-fascists were involved. Of course, many opponents of Hitler had spent the Nazi years in prison or in concentration camps. How many good and able communists, social-democrats and plain anti-fascists never survived the Nazi terror! But those that did provided the hope for the future of Germany.

The Soviet military administration in Germany recognised this and, only a month after the capitulation, allowed anti-fascist parties to begin activity in the Soviet zone. Immediately the KPD issued its manifesto, which called for an anti-fascist democracy in which fascism would not only be politically banned but would be destroyed from the roots up, through the destruction of the power of the monopolists and Prussian militarist landowners who bore the historic responsibility for easing Hitler and his gangster band into power. Above all, the KPD called for the establishment of the political unity of the working class movement, the division of which in 1933 had been the decisive factor in the failure to prevent the fascists coming to power. Only a firmly united working class movement could guarantee that fascism would never again achieve influence.

The Social-Democratic Party (the SPD) had more or less organisationally ceased to exist inside Germany during the Nazi period. Now the Party was reborn in the form of a central committee that constituted itself in Berlin, composed of leading social-democrats. They issued their own manifesto, some days after the KPD, which contained many similar and parallel proposals. Not a week later the two party leaderships came together and agreed on a common 'action programme' in which they bound themselves to work together to get rid of the remnants of fascism and to achieve an anti-fascist democracy. At the same time they agreed to discuss all ideological questions together. This will to unity was a natural outcome of the experiences of fascism under which social-democrats and communists had suffered and died together. As a Thuringian social-

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democrat said to a visiting British journalist later in 1947: 'The Nazis took me to Berlin handcuffed to Theodore Neubauer, one of our communist comrades, who was afterwards murdered. I said to myself then: "Why did it need the Nazis to bring us together?" '

The majority of social-democrats in Germany recognised this policy as the only possible one. In the western zones of Germany, too, socialists and communists began to come together. However, there were still right wingers in German social-democracy who had learnt nothing from the past. These elements were led by Kurt Schumacher who spread his influence in the western zones under the benevolent eye of the British occupation authorities. To sabotage the policy of unity he tried to appear the more genuine revolutionary, talking of German capitalism being dead and the immediate task being the construction of socialism.

The Berlin leadership of the SPD, under Otto Grotewohl and the KPD, united on their action programme, got on with the concrete tasks of 1945, discovering and turning out all the active Nazis from their positions, organising local administrations that could start bringing order in the chaos, help ensure food supplies and begin organising the population to clear the rubble away and, at least to some extent, get things going again. Then they carried through a land reform that gave the land to the peasants and to the refugees from the east, so ensuring food production and, at the same time, dispossessing the reactionary (and in the main Nazi) big landowners. The industries owned by war criminals and active Nazis were expropriated. In their enormous task the 'activists of the first hour', as they have gone down in history, with communists and socialists at their head, were helped, aided and advised by the Soviet military administration. In every way possible the Soviet officers helped the reborn working class movement and at the same time prevented reactionary forces from organising in their zone.

In the western zones the occupation powers, despite their signature of the Potsdam agreement in which the de-Nazification, demilitarisation and democratisation of Germany were foreseen, pursued exactly the opposite policy. A TUC delegation to the British zone of Germany in December 1945 reported 'alarm and indignation' caused by the continued employment of known Nazis in the zone. A progressive British officer (an increasing rarity) reported: 'Men who suffered in Dachau or Buchenwald, heroes of the underground movement, are treated as children or just as a bloody nuisance. There are hundreds of Nazi Party members in the administration of

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every large town in the British zone.'* In these conditions it is rather horrifying but not surprising that the right wingers around Schumacher managed to smash the attempts at working class unity in the western zones and carried out a virulent campaign of anti-communism and anti-Sovietism which deepened and confirmed the split in the West German labour movement. They handed over power to the reactionary forces who held it until their monopoly was broken (or should it be 'dented'?) by the Brandt government of 1967.

In the Soviet zone the daily co-operation of socialists and communists in the tasks of reconstruction, the formation of a strong, unified trade union movement through which the working class could make its voice heard: all this, plus the danger of the revival of reaction due to the policy of the Western powers, led to an increasing demand for the political unity of the working class. The process of overcoming past traditions, of gaining confidence in one another, in admitting mistakes in the past, was not easy from either side. However, the SPD and KPD managed it because the practical experiences of reconstruction pushed them into it and because they remembered the oaths they had sworn in Hitler's prisons and camps: 'Never again a divided working class movement!'

In April 1946 the KPD and the SPD of the Soviet zone (the SPD in the west zones, under right-wing influence, refused to recognise the Berlin leadership) held a Unity Congress where the two parties united to form the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED). The Party combined 680,000 former SPD members and 620,000 former KPD members, and was thus numerically the strongest party in Germany as a whole. Incidentally, the unification was greeted by a telegram from a group of Labour MPs and trade union leaders who, remaining true to the principles on which Labour was elected in 1945, stated: 'We believe that the socialist reconstruction of Europe can only be carried out in close co-operation and unity between communists and socialists. . . .'†

The most important consequences of the policy of working class political unity, pursued in the Soviet zone, may be expressed as follows: (1) The complete eradication of fascism and its root causes in the imperialist system (arms monopolies, etc) on the territory of the then Soviet occupation zone, now the GDR. (2) The establishment of the GDR, the simple existence of which helped to secure

* *Reynolds News*, December 30, 1945.

† Among the signatories were: K. Zilliacus MP, H. L. Hutchinson MP, D. N. Pritt KC MP, J. Platts-Mills KC MP, J. Silverman MP and H. Davies MP.

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peace in Europe by obstructing the revenge-seeking plans of West German governments. (3) The building up in the GDR, from the ruins of war, of a socialist society in which the working class has power and in which it is immune from the problems of capitalism in crisis which stop short of the Western state borders.

Such were the momentous consequences of the vision and determination of the socialist and communist leaderships when they chose the path of working class political unity in 1945-46. The lesson deserves to be learnt.

PROGRESSIVE ASSEMBLY

(*An assembly of representatives of progressive movements met at Liège in Belgium on April 26-29, 1975, to make constructive proposals to the heads of state who will be meeting in Helsinki to consider recommendations made by East-West representatives at Geneva for European security and co-operation. We print here the report, slightly abridged, of the Commission over which Fenner Brockway, with Soviet and French co-chairmen, presided at Liège. There were 120 delegates who attended the sessions of the Commission, and 57 participated in the discussion*—Ed. *LM*)

THE Third Commission was allotted the comprehensive duty of considering the following subjects:

1. Economic co-operation
2. The energy problem
3. Social progress across frontiers
4. The strengthening of democracy
5. Cultural co-operation
6. A better understanding between nations
7. The improvement of contacts between peoples.

Economic Co-operation and the Problem of Energy

The participants welcome the decisions on economic co-operation by the Commission (Basket Three*) set up at Geneva by the first Helsinki Conference. They include co-operation between West and East Europe on projects relating to raw materials, energy (including atomic energy), electrical power, transport by road and river,

* On French initiative the groups appointed to consider different subjects were named 'baskets' to overcome a constitutional technical objection to the term 'commissions'.

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scientific and technical research and application, training of personnel and protection of the environment.

We hold that if this extensive economic co-operation is to be fulfilled, the second Helsinki Conference must establish continuing organisations to implement its decisions.

Meanwhile, it is imperative that every opportunity should be taken to expand trade between West and East and that all discriminatory restrictions on the exchange of goods should be ended. Participants at the Commission urged that the principle of the 'most favoured nation' in trade should be included in the final document of the second Helsinki Conference.

The participants regarded it as important that co-operation should be developed at all levels in the economy and particularly stressed the need for large-scale business links between socialist and capitalist countries in Europe; the importance of including small and medium-size enterprises in economic and trade co-operation; the relevance of promoting joint projects on the part of Co-operative organisations in the East and West as well as joint trade union activities. All these ties, projects and activities will favour the progress of economic development and the improvement of the well-being of the working people in each country, and serve as an important basis for strengthening detente and peace in Europe. . . .

The Commission does not forget the dire economic needs of the third world. Participants consider that when world consultations take place on energy they should be extended to a consideration of the adjustment of the existing conditions under which the peoples of Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean provide raw materials and foods to the industrialised nations. . . .

Social Progress across Frontiers and the Strengthening of Democracy

Economic co-operation between West and East should greatly increase production. Pressure should be exerted to ensure that governments distribute this greater wealth for the social progress of their peoples. The participants felt this was absolutely necessary in view of the serious extent of unemployment and the inflationary cost of living in the capitalist countries. Social progress in all countries must include the full satisfaction of human rights to health, continuing education, leisure activities, better working conditions, job satisfaction, adequate provision for housing and for widows and the aged.

The Commission recognised that as long as governments expend vast revenues on armaments, which could be released for social purposes by European security and co-operation, it will not be

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possible to realise human social fulfilment.

The participation of trade union representatives in the Commission was appreciated as a major historical event, following the recent Geneva meeting when trade unionists of different orientations met for the first time.

The Commission expresses complete solidarity with the struggle of the Spanish people against fascism and for peace and democracy. The intrigues of neo-fascists in various countries of Europe cannot be ignored.

The Commission welcomes the progress towards the establishment of democratic regimes in Greece and Portugal and calls for the implementation of United Nations decisions demanding the territorial integrity and independence of Cyprus. There is a great need to defend the economic well-being of Portugal from sabotage by capitalist interests and to encourage its development by incorporation with the economies of Europe.

In the view of the Commission, democracy cannot be confined to political institutions. Industrial democracy should be established providing for the participation of the workers in the control of an economy accountable to the community and serving its interests.

Cultural Co-operation

The Commission devoted an entire session to the consideration of cultural co-operation. Writers, artists and academics from thirteen countries met separately, and the Commission had the advantage of hearing their report. Members of the Commission endorsed the conclusions of this report and added valuable proposals. It was urged that the second Helsinki Conference should include among its continuing organisations a commission to develop cultural co-operation, and that representatives of cultural activities should be included within it. Emphasis was given to the part which women, increasingly enjoying human equality, are taking in cultural development, an appropriate theme for International Women's Year. Similarly, the Commission urges that workers should be fully associated with cultural life, from which they are often excluded. Co-operation between West and East will become a full reality in mind and spirit only if cultural co-operation develops still further. The creative quality of the whole of Europe will be enriched by the exchange of the genius in beauty and fulfilment of the art, literature and science of each country. Due respect should be paid, in this exchange, to the national sovereignty of European countries and to the customs and traditions of their peoples.

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Cultural co-operation should proceed at different levels, both on the level of individual initiative and by the activity of various organisations, including the United Nations. UNESCO has proved its great efficiency in international cultural relations, and the Commission urges that it should assume an even more important role in this sphere on our continent.

Better Understanding Between Nations and Improvement of Contact Between Peoples

The nations of Europe, whatever their political alignment and social and economic structures, should recognise the right of each people to determine its own character and should accept the need for co-operation as above ideological differences. The peoples of each nation must exert imperative pressure on their governments to insist that co-operation over the whole of Europe shall supplement the recognition of their national rights.

The Commission regrets that differences regarding the movement of peoples and the expression of ideas across frontiers should be delaying agreements at the Third Basket at Geneva. The Commission notes that agreements have already been reached on a number of important issues. Full agreement should be given the opportunity to develop as trust grows. Important as human contact between peoples is, differences and doubts cannot be overcome suddenly and the opportunity to develop mutual confidence through co-operation should not be rejected because the ideal has not yet been reached.

Meanwhile, every opportunity for increasing contact between peoples should be seized: (a) by enlarging opportunities already offered by existing East-West organisations, (b) by promoting joint trade union and Co-operative activity as mentioned above, (c) by extension of visits across the frontiers, including tours by school children, the positive associations of youth and student organisations, the Christian churches and religious denominations, and cultural activities as already indicated. The Commission also wishes to see educational exchanges at every level, between teachers, students at schools and universities, and university researchers. To assist this, initiatives should be taken to prepare new textbooks, readers' anthologies free from national and racial prejudices and the remnants of the cold war.

As a means of spreading information through the media (newspapers, radio and television), the Commission proposes to the International Secretariat to consider the setting up of a press service

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to provide news and information on an international scale. The Commission also recommends to the Secretariat and to national committees that study groups and seminars be arranged to develop dialogue and knowledge. We welcome the proposal of the Secretariat to publish the booklet, *Workers in Europe*, in several languages for international circulation. . . .

A LOCAL INCOME TAX

Dr John White*

IT is now quite obvious to members of local authorities that if the present system of local government finance is not changed, and changed soon, the very future of these authorities as they exist now is threatened. There can be little doubt that the blatant inequities of the present rating system will not for much longer be tolerated by those who pay.

The assumption in this article is that local government will continue in a form similar to that at present. However, in the context of moves towards decentralisation on the one hand and increasing public consultation on the other, it could well mean that demand will build up for a further radical reorganisation. Nevertheless, without adequate finance any form of government ceases to have a real meaning. In terms of local government this ideally would be largely locally determined and with the elected representatives accountable to the people who pay.

The case for and against a local income tax has been widely discussed. The Government Green Paper of 1971 seemed on balance to be against it. Every advantage was carefully countered by a disadvantage and exaggerated importance was made of details in application.

The first question that one must surely ask is would such a tax be politically sound? The answer must be an emphatic yes. The second would be whether the difficulties of introduction are so inordinately difficult that however right in principle it could never get off the ground, and here the answer is no. A local tax on gross personal income has the great advantage of relating to ability to pay. If, however, the rate of such a tax is locally determined, there will inevitably be inequity from area to area without some modification of the system. If the rate of a local tax is determined nationally,

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equity would be required with some loss of local autonomy.

Such a tax would be paid by all wage-earning residents, including those who do not now make a direct contribution to domestic rates. Undoubtedly this would remove the constant source of irritation to present ratepayers of what appears to be an 'evasion' of rates by many people living and working in an area, even though this 'evasion' may be more apparent than real.

Collection does not seem to present great problems. This could either be through the existing PAYE (pay as you earn) system, in which case no new organisation would be necessary, or collection could be made on a residential basis. Norway manages the latter alternative without any great difficulties.

The yield would be buoyant in contrast to the regressive nature of present rates, and it is estimated that one per cent of net taxable income would give a net yield of £190,000,000 in England and Wales (1974-75 figures).

Payment of local taxes by deduction at source of income could well eradicate what is surely one of the greatest irritations of the present system (often underestimated) the method of demand—annually or six monthly. Whatever method of payment is chosen finally it is probably the only time that most people find themselves really face to face with the annual figure of a tax. Here is clearly a strong case for local income tax but the disadvantages cannot be ignored. From the central government point of view it could seriously impair the use of income tax as a national regulator. Neither the treasury nor any chancellor is likely to look on the prospect with equanimity. Although based on ability to pay, there will obviously be large regional variations in the return from a specific rate of tax. To preserve some equity a form of rate support grant will obviously be required. Again, the ability of a certain population to pay may often bear no relationship to its need. Here government help would be required.

The problem of using the PAYE system—collected at work—and somehow relating this to residence would certainly necessitate the Inland Revenue office transmitting more personal information to a local authority than at present would occur, but this would not seem to be an overwhelming objection. Probably the greatest problem is in the degree of sophistication of the present system of deducting tax at source which would undoubtedly be upset.

Further problems of this tax would arise with relation to companies and profits. Determination of where the profits were earned would be difficult with larger firms and if one were to chose the option

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of the area in which central management and control takes place, there could be large distortions in favour of London and the south-east. It could well be that, whatever the basis of collection for individuals, that for companies would have to be national.

The case for a local income tax is a strong one. Theoretically it would be possible to make it the sole basis of local government. Whether this would be desirable is questionable and it is certainly unlikely that a central government of any complexion would agree to such a measure. The Greater London Council, in its evidence to Layfield*, supports a local income tax, but sees it as part of a package including a modified rating system, a local sales tax, motor vehicle tax to be paid to local authorities, a local tax on motor spirit and a tourist tax. With such a package—which would not be so clumsy to administer as it sounds—it could be possible to produce equity in the system, not only between individuals in the community but also between individuals and commerce.

The present rating system has the advantage of an easily identifiable source and the area of accountability is well defined. However, there is no doubt that small businesses are suffering as much as, if not more than, individuals. To let the present system continue unaltered is inviting disaster. When Layfield reports, it must be hoped that recommendations for change will be strong and that the government of the day will be prepared to implement them.

A local income tax will present problems in implementation but these must be faced. In this way local government would achieve a sufficiently buoyant local source of income to enable it to move away from the present trend of becoming little more than an agent of central government.

* The Layfield Committee of Enquiry into local government finance, which is to make its report by the end of the year.

CORRESPONDENCE

R. Palme Dutt

HAVING JUST LEARNED about the recent death of R. Palme Dutt, I wish to express my sincere condolences for this irreparable loss. I had the privilege of meeting Comrade Dutt on various occasions before the second world war, and he made a deep impression on me. He was much more than the editor of *Labour Monthly* from 1921 to 1974. A true Communist and revolutionary, a man of great erudition and wide perspectives, he was also a warm-hearted human being. His books and articles were a model of objective Marxist analysis. In any event, his life and activities will no doubt inspire future generations of revolutionaries, not only in Great Britain and the Commonwealth, but also throughout the world.

EMERIC BIEDERMANN
Romania

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BOOKS

The Labour Party and the Struggle for Socialism
David Coates
Cambridge University Press, 258 pp, £5

THERE IS MUCH of value in this book. The emergence of the Labour Party as an offspring of the Liberal Party, carrying with it the limited Liberal radicalism of the trade unions of that time, and indeed engaged in bitter conflict with the militant syndicalism of Tom Mann and the newer unions, leads through a whole decade of virtual coalition between Liberal and Labour in the days of Lloyd George to the actual wartime coalition of 1915-18. This period, and the adoption in 1918 of the famous clause 4 which transformed the Labour Party's programme into a socialist programme but which made no difference whatever to the basically anti-socialist, anti-working class actions of the leaders of the Labour Party in the subsequent period, is usefully and adequately covered in this book. So too are the Labour governments of MacDonald of 1924 and 1929-31, those of Attlee between 1945 and 1951 and those of Wilson between 1964 and 1970.

The author states early on: 'I will argue that the Labour Party has periodically claimed to be engaged in the creation of a democratic socialist Britain, and that even when it has not been so bold, its leaders have invariably promised that if elected to power they would introduce major programmes of equalitarian social reform of a scale and character to alter qualitatively the lives of the many poor and dispossessed in our midst. And, as a result, the Labour Party has always appealed for the support of working people and their families, and has offered itself as the natural home for socialist militants in the labour movement' (p v).

His conclusions are that it is not through a peaceful transition to socialism, it is not through a parliamentary approach to the question of socialism, it is not through the Labour Party that socialism can be won; that not only the right wing of the Labour Party but also the left wing have been and are pursuing policies remote from socialism and to the working class: the right because that is their philosophy in any case, the left because of the limitations of the powers of parliament itself, since so much of government is carried on by the multinational firms, the banks and, so far as Whitehall is concerned, the upper echelons of the civil service bureaucracy, being therefore outside the power of Labour governments to control.

There is much to accept in the analysis and assessment of the earlier Labourites: Snowden, MacDonald and Thomas are on record; so, too, the Attlees, Bevins, Morrisons and Crippses are on record not only in their deeds but in their writings; and the same is true of Wilson, Crosland, Jenkins, Healey, Callaghan and Lever. 'Labourism' is laid bare. The limitations of Labour's left in the shape of the old Independent Labour Party (ILP), which virtually wrote the earlier Labour policies, of the red Clydesiders, like Kirkwood, Wheatley and Maxton, and of later lefts like Bevan and Cripps, are also subjected to the sort of devastating scrutiny which the Communist

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Party has been making throughout the half-century.

And his criticism is brought ironically up to date by the opening paragraph of chapter 1. This draws the contrast between the enthusiastic reception given to Alvaro Bunster, Allende's ambassador in London, at the Labour Party Conference in October 1973, when he called for support for the resistance to the junta which was already torturing and killing Chilean socialists, and the action of the Labour Foreign Secretary, Callaghan, six months later in allowing warships from British shipyards to be handed over to the Chilean fascists.

We can repeat therefore that there is much of value in this exposé of 'Labourism' and the Labour Party leaders in the more than 70 years of the Labour Party. And the criticism of the weaknesses and limitations of the Labour left throughout the years has been constantly demonstrated and fought in the labour movement by the Communist Party. What then is wrong with this analysis? Above all, the role of the Communist Party in the whole period is ignored, and this is crucial, for this has not been merely a question of laying weaknesses bare, but of mobilising the movement in action and struggle for socialist policies: this it is which marks the line of the Communist Party in estimating the role of the Labour Party and of the development of a genuine left (not yet created but in process of creating before our eyes).

It is not by any means necessary to agree with the assumptions of this writer to welcome the concise review of the period which his book contains and the debate to which it can give rise in the labour movement as a whole.

BEN AINLEY

An Economic Background to Munich: International Business and Czechoslovakia 1918-1938
Alice Teichova

Cambridge University Press, 422 pp, £9.50

WITH THE CELEBRATIONS of the thirtieth anniversary of the allied victory over fascism, public attention is being focused on the second world war. In this regard it is fortunate that Alice Teichova's book has been recently published, since it casts considerable light on the economic background to the most important event prior to the war, the capitulation to Nazi German demands at Munich by the British and French governments.

In this book, Alice Teichova looks in detail at economic developments within Czechoslovakia between the two world wars. In particular she concentrates on the penetration of the Czechoslovak economy by foreign capital, which centred on the most technically advanced and productive sectors. There are major chapters on foreign investment and the role of foreign industrial combines in mining, metallurgy, chemicals and mechanical and electrical engineering, while the penetration of foreign capital on Czechoslovak banking is separately analysed. The economic analysis is supported by comprehensive data presented in the book's 100 tables, while the extensive footnotes and bibliography based on Czech, German and English sources bear further testimony to the solidity of the research.

The most interesting political theme that emerges from the book is its contention that Munich represented an attempt by British capital to come to an agreement with German capital 'on the basis of the sacrifice of Czechoslovak independ-

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ence and the prospect of an anti-Soviet and possibly also anti-American alignment' (p 381). It had been earlier pointed out that British investment in Europe amounted to only 8 per cent of total British foreign investment as against the French figure of 60 per cent. Thus, although central and south-east Europe were important areas for British capital, they were not the main ones. Evidence is produced to show that during the 1930s German capital extended its influence into the Czechoslovak economy, especially through cartel agreements, thereby creating a firmer competitive base for German business enterprises *vis-à-vis* French and British capital. Against this background it is possible to understand the political and diplomatic policies of the British government prior to and during the Munich period. As the book states, 'the representatives of Great Britain did not object to a certain strengthening of German economic, political and military strength in this area' (central and south-east Europe), while the French government's much greater reluctance to such a deal was clearly related to the greater economic and political stake it had in the region.

As other works by Alice Teichova have shown, the post-Munich negotiations between Britain and Germany broke down as the British government and business representatives refused to accept all the economic demands which Nazi Germany presented to them. Thus, despite Munich, this attempt to form a European capitalist bloc as a bulwark against the Soviet Union, and as a rival to the United States, broke down. However, for some bourgeois statesmen, Edward Heath and Christopher Soames among them, this European dream lives on. This valuable, if expensive, book gives many insights into the economic developments that formed the backcloth to Munich—developments which in many ways were the precursor to those which have led to the formation of the Common Market.

JON BLOOMFIELD

Frederick Engels: A Biography
L. F. Ilyichov
Progress (Central Books), 512 pp, £1.50

FOR TOO LONG we have been misled by Engels's own modesty, *vis-à-vis* Marx. In a very real sense, the young Engels introduced the post-Hegelian 'young Marx' to Marxism with his 1843 *Outlines of a Critique of Political Economy*.

He was responsible for the 'marshalling' of volumes II, III and IV of *Capital*; created in his *Critique of the Erfurt Program* a document as important to scientific socialism as Marx's *Critique of the Gotha Program*; provided Lenin with key concepts which enabled him to develop 'Marxism' into 'Marxism-Leninism'; codified scientific socialism in *Anti-Dühring* and assisted, and was assisted by, Marx for over 40 years in assembling that science from the mass of previous ideological material which by the mid-nineteenth century was crying out for assembly into scientific socialism: dialectical materialism.

Although in my opinion there is no point in 'choosing' who was the greater scientific socialist, Marx or Engels (they were as inseparable as the north and south poles of a magnet), were I forced to choose some *sine qua non*, one man without whom that science of sciences could never have come into existence or have come as early as it did, it would be Frederick Engels.

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A reading of this biography will show that Engels's contributions to dialectics, science, the labour movement, the roles of force and of elections in the proletarian struggle, the place of the middle strata, especially the peasants, the nature of the coming twentieth-century imperialism and its economic, political and military wars, and a dozen other vitally important concepts of scientific socialism were paralleled by Marx's contributions to our science but not exceeded.

Many of the works attributed to Marx were joint productions. *The German Ideology* manuscript is in Engels's handwriting. Many articles and passages attributed to Marx alone were the product of Engels, and in 1847 Engels pre-empted *The Communist Manifesto* itself with his drafts for the Communist League.

In their work the authors cover Engels's personal and family history, albeit (and understandably) a trifle ethereally, but that is perhaps to be expected. More important, they cover the period between the non-scientific socialist Marx and Engels and their first joint works in the 1840s; their work, intellectual and physical, in the mid-century period of revolutions; in the period of revolutionary ebb in the 1850s; and in the upsurge in the 1870s, which led to the Paris Commune; and, finally; in the ideologically generic period 1870-1883.

They then examine the period between Marx's death in 1883 and that of Engels in 1895, which saw Engels standing astride the theoretical and practical territory of world proletarian activity like some mighty intellectual and giant-of-action colossus.

No scientific socialist, dialectical materialist—please let us note and use these terms—should neglect this book. Its detailed 'inventory' of Engels's contribution to 'Marxism' contains over 100 theoretical headings which will convince the reader that if ever there was a man whose life's work deserved the unstinted venom of reaction (which it received and continues to receive) it was that of Frederick Engels. KEN GEERING

Walls and Bars
Eugene Victor Debs
Charles H. Kerr (Chicago), 286 pp, available on order from Collet's

EUGENE DEBS was the great American socialist who proclaimed as his prison creed: 'While there is a lower class, I am in it; while there is a criminal element, I am of it; while there is a soul in prison, I am not free.' This book, based on his own prison experiences for militant strike leadership and for public opposition to the first world war, was originally published in 1927 and is one of the classics of anti-prison literature. Its republication is timely and useful for present-day movements that have revived interest in prison reform.

Debs was a man of great moral stature, and his writings and speeches have a simple directness that rings with an almost naïve indignation. His exposures of prison evils often have the tone of a Sunday-school sermon, but are redeemed by a forthright class-consciousness. His views may be summarised in this statement: 'Hard economic conditions under which life in its richness and fullness and beauty is denied, and under which gaunt necessity has sway, bear a greater share of responsibility for the creation of criminals and the commission of crime than all other causes combined.'

WILLIAM POMEROY

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CONSTRUCTIVE SELL-OUT

READERS of our June issue may have noticed a strange-looking advert at the top of page 286 which crept in and then stayed there: we should perhaps be thankful that this and a one-day delay in publication were the only ill-effects to the June *LM* of the NGA's overtime ban. None of our trade union readers are likely to grumble at that.

Sales of the June issue at trade union conferences included 14 at the General and Municipal Workers' Union Conference in Aberdeen and 50 (all that were available) to the AUEW's Constructional Section delegates. We await news of sales which took place at conferences of ASLEF (train drivers), Post Office engineers, local government officers and the engineers (AUEW).

Donors to our May fund greeted the 'great news from Vietnam'. 'For RPD and also in recognition of the debt the world's labour and socialist movement owes to the Vietnamese people who have stood for so many years literally in the front line of battle,' wrote Noel Hughes from Cardiff. Another donation 'In Memory of RPD' came with the comment: 'The antics of Wilson and Co make the survival of *LM* essential' (L. E. Bond, Chesterfield, Derbyshire). Every donation and every extra sale of the magazine helps to assure the journal's continued place in the labour movement.

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Marx and Engels Collected Works: Vol 3, Marx and Engels 1843-44. Lawrence & Wishart, 670 pp, £3.

South Africa in Africa, Sam C. Nolutshungu. Manchester University Press, 330 pp, £6.50.

The Tactics of Pressure, Brian Frost. Stainer & Bell, 110 pp, £1.50.

The Sealed Train, Michael Pearson. Macmillan, 320 pp, £4.50.

Mozambique: Memoirs of a Revolution, John Paul. Penguin, 232 pp, 80p.

A Seventh Man, John Berger and Jean Mohr. Penguin, 238 pp, £1.

Industrial Relations and the Limits of the Law, Brian Weekes and others. Basil Blackwell, 344 pp, £7.50.

Calculating, Joyce and Bill Hutton; *The Activist's Handbook,* Bob Houlton; *Statistics for Bargainers,* Karl Hedderwick; *The Organised Worker,* Tony Topham. Arrow, each 96 pp, 75p.

Industrial Studies 1: the Key Skills, edited by Ed Coker and Geoffrey Stuttard. Arrow, 168 pp, £2.75.

Ten Years after Ivan Denisovich, Zhores Medvedev. Penguin, 250 pp, 60p.

The Offshore Islanders from Roman Occupation to European Entry, Paul Johnson. Penguin, 636 pp, £1.75.

Doctor in Love, Richard Gordon. Penguin, 190 pp, 50p.

The Limits of Development Studies, Paul Streeten. Leeds University Press, 38 pp, 30p.

Leisure and Recreation in Britain Today, Terry Bushell. Communist Party, 20 pp, 15p.

Unilever's World: CIS Anti-Report No 11, CIS, 104 pp, £1.

BOSS: The First Five Years. International Defence and Aid Fund, 40 pp, 25p.

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